

A Publication of the  
National Wildfire  
Coordinating Group

## **NATIONAL INTERAGENCY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Sponsored by  
United States  
Department of Agriculture

### **TASK BOOK FOR THE POSITION OF**

United States  
Department of the Interior

### **FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)**

National Association of  
State Foresters



**PMS 311-30**  
**NFES 2340**

**August 1993**

<b>TASK BOOK ASSIGNED TO:</b>
INDIVIDUAL'S NAME, DUTY STATION, AND PHONE NUMBER
<b>TASK BOOK INITIATED BY:</b>
OFFICIAL'S NAME, TITLE, DUTY STATION, AND PHONE NUMBER
LOCATION AND DATE THAT TASK BOOK WAS INITIATED

*The material contained in this book accurately defines the performance expected of the position for which it was developed. This task book is approved for use as a position qualification document in accordance with the instructions contained herein.*

**VERIFICATION / CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETED TASK BOOK  
FOR THE POSITION OF**

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**FINAL EVALUATOR'S VERIFICATION**

I verify that all tasks have been performed and are complete with signatures. I also verify that

has performed as a trainee and should therefore be considered for certification in this position.

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**EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE AND DATE**

---

**EVALUATOR'S PRINTED NAME, TITLE, DUTY STATION, AND PHONE NUMBER**

**AGENCY CERTIFICATION :**

I certify that

has met all requirements for qualification in this position and that such qualification has been issued.

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**CERTIFYING OFFICIAL'S SIGNATURE AND DATE**

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**CERTIFYING OFFICIAL'S NAME, TITLE, DUTY STATION, AND PHONE NUMBER**

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National Interagency Fire Center, ATTN: Supply  
3833 S. Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354

Order NFES # 2340

## NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP POSITION TASK BOOK

Position Task Books (PTB) have been developed for designated positions within the National Interagency Incident Management System. Each PTB lists the performance requirements (tasks) for the specific position in a format that allows a trainee to be evaluated against written guidelines. Successful performance of all tasks, as observed and recorded by an evaluator, will result in a recommendation to the agency that the trainee be certified in that position.

Evaluation and confirmation of the individual's performance of all the tasks may involve more than one evaluator and can occur on incidents, in classroom simulation, and in other work situations. Designated PTBs require position performance during which the majority of required tasks are demonstrated on a single incident. Some positions also required that specific tasks be performed on a wildland fire—performance of these tasks on other types of incidents are NOT qualifying. It is important that performance be critically evaluated and accurately recorded by each evaluator. All tasks must be evaluated. All bullet statements within a task which require an action (contain an action verb) must be demonstrated before that task can be signed off.

A more detailed description of this process, definitions of terms, and responsibilities are included in the Wildland Fire Qualification Subsystem Guide 310-1. A brief list of responsibilities also appears below.

### RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The **Local Office** is responsible for:
  - Selecting trainees based on the needs of the local office and the geographic area.
  - Ensuring that the trainee meets the training and experience requirements included in the Wildland Fire Qualification Subsystem Guide 310-1.
  - Issuing PTBs to document task performance.
  - Explaining to the trainee the purpose and processes of the PTB as well as the trainee's responsibilities.
  - Providing opportunities for evaluation and/or making the trainee available for evaluation.
  - Providing an evaluator for local assignments.
  - Tracking progress of the trainee.
  - Confirming PTB completion.
  - Determining certification per local policy.
  - Issuing proof of certification.
2. The **individual** is responsible for:
  - Reviewing and understanding instructions in the PTB.
  - Identifying desired objectives/goals.

- Providing background information to an evaluator.
  - Satisfactorily demonstrating completion of all tasks for an assigned position within three years.
  - Assuring the Evaluation Record is complete.
  - Notifying local office personnel when the PTB is completed and providing a copy.
  - Keeping the original PTB in personal records.
3. The **Evaluator** is responsible for:
- Being qualified and proficient in the position being evaluated.
  - Meeting with the trainee and determining past experience, current qualifications, and desired objectives/goals.
  - Reviewing tasks with the trainee.
  - Explaining to the trainee the evaluation procedures that will be utilized and which objectives may be attained.
  - Identifying tasks to be performed during the evaluation period.
  - Accurately evaluating and recording demonstrated performance of tasks. Satisfactory performance shall be documented by dating and initialing completion of the task. Unsatisfactory performance shall be documented in the Evaluation Record.
  - Completing the Evaluation Record found at the end of each PTB.
  - Signing the verification statement inside the front cover of the PTB when all tasks have been initialed.
4. The **Training Specialist** is responsible for:
- Identifying incident evaluation opportunities.
  - Identifying and assigning an evaluator that can provide a positive experience for the trainee, and make an accurate and honest appraisal of the trainee's performance.
  - Providing PTBs to approved trainees on the incident when local agency was unable to provide them.
  - Documenting the assignment.
  - Conducting progress reviews.
  - Conducting a close-out interview with the trainee and evaluator and assuring that documentation is proper and complete.

## QUALIFICATION RECORD

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<p><b><u>GENERAL</u></b></p> <p>1. <u>Obtain and assemble information and materials needed for kit.</u> Kit will be assembled and prepared prior to receiving an assignment. Kit will contain critical items needed for the assignment and items needed for functioning during the first 48 hours. Kit will be easily transportable and within agency weight limitation (per National Mobilization Guide). The basic information and materials needed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belt weather kit.</li> <li>• Ruler/scale.</li> <li>• Calculator.</li> <li>• Clinometer/abney.</li> <li>• Compass.</li> <li>• Planimeter.</li> <li>• Dot grids.</li> </ul>	O		
<p><b><u>MOBILIZATION</u></b></p> <p>2. <u>Obtain complete information from dispatch upon initial activation.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident name.</li> <li>• Incident order number.</li> <li>• Request number.</li> <li>• Reporting location.</li> <li>• Reporting time.</li> <li>• Transportation arrangements/travel routes.</li> <li>• Contact procedures during travel (telephone/radio).</li> </ul>	I		

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               I = task must be performed on an incident (flood, fire, search & rescue, etc.)  
               W = task must be performed on a wildfire incident  
               /R = Rare event—the evaluation assignment may not provide opportunities to demonstrate performance. The evaluator may be able to determine skills/knowledge through interview or the home office may need to arrange for another assignment or a simulation.

QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<p>3. <u>Gather information necessary to assess incident assignment and determine immediate needs and actions.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incident Commander's/Supervisor's name, location, contact.</li> <li>Current resource commitments.</li> <li>Current situation.</li> <li>Expected duration of assignment.</li> </ul>	I		
<p><b><u>INCIDENT ACTIVITIES</u></b></p> <p>4. <u>Arrive at incident.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check in at check-in location according to agency guidelines and within acceptable time limit.</li> <li>Locate assigned location.</li> </ul>	I		
<p>5. <u>Obtain briefing from Situation Unit Leader.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand location of assignment.</li> <li>Understand information expected from you.</li> <li>Develop common understanding of priorities, time limits for completion, method of communication, transportation and coordination with established contacts.</li> </ul>	I		

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QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<p>6. <u>Obtain required additional equipment.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain available materials and supplies within 30 minutes of briefing.</li> <li>Order additional equipment and materials needed.</li> <li>Utilize appropriate personnel protection equipment.</li> </ul>	I		
<p>7. <u>Perform general field observations.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine and record incident perimeter.</li> <li>Determine potential changes in incident perimeter.</li> <li>Determine appropriate and safe travel routes.</li> <li>Determine areas threatened.</li> <li>Monitor weather changes and report appropriately.</li> <li>Isolate problem areas.</li> <li>Identify and report safety zones.</li> <li>Identify and report hazards.</li> <li>Monitor progress of operations and support.</li> <li>Monitor, record and report resource limitations and locations as appropriate.</li> </ul>	I		
<p>8. <u>Communications.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain appropriate communication supplies and apparatus (radio, telephone, etc.) from communications unit.</li> </ul>	I		

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QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
9. <u>Transportation.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain vehicle transportation from ground support unit.</li> <li>Obtain aerial transportation from air operations.</li> </ul>	I		
10. <u>Report hazardous situations.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediately report hazardous, life-threatening situations to appropriate incident management personnel.</li> </ul>	I		
11. <u>Maintain Field Map.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map access routes.</li> <li>Designate current and potential helispots.</li> <li>Show values threatened.</li> <li>Show hazardous situations (fuel concentrations for wildfire, etc.).</li> <li>Show incident perimeter and potential incident perimeter.</li> </ul>	I		
12. <u>Monitor and record weather conditions.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculate temperature.</li> <li>Calculate relative humidity.</li> <li>Measure wind speed and direction.</li> <li>Complete weather observation form.</li> </ul>	O		

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QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<p>13. <u>Monitor incident situation.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on type of incident: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildfire. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor fuel models, flame lengths, rate of spread.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Other. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop specifics to be monitored. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor, record and report as appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I		
<p>14. <u>Safety.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adhere to agency specific and incident appropriate safety standards while performing all tasks.</li> </ul>	I		
<p>15. <u>Transmit field data.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transmit accurate data via radio or other available and appropriate media to the Situation Unit Leader within established timeframes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative.</li> <li>Legal description.</li> <li>Audiogram.</li> <li>Unit Coordinator.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I		

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QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<p>16. <u>Map and overlay production.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insure map and overlay production adheres to established agency and incident guidelines (example NWCG 401-1 for wildfire incidents).</li> <li>• Ensure production meets established timeframes to allow for review prior to planning meeting or inclusion into incident action plan.</li> </ul>	I		
<p>17. <u>Transition to replacement (if necessary).</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief replacement about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of incident history.</li> <li>• Facilities.</li> <li>• Established timeframes and schedules.</li> <li>• Appropriate personnel names.</li> <li>• Transition with replacement for at least one operational period.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	I		
<p>18. <u>Documentation.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insure documents are organized in a neat fashion.</li> <li>• Provide all written documentation developed during the incident assignment to the documentation unit.</li> </ul>	I		

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QUALIFICATION RECORD  
Continuation Sheet

POSITION: FIELD OBSERVER (FOBS)

TASK	C O D E*	EVALUATION RECORD #	EVALUATOR: Initial & date upon completion of task
<b><u>DEMOBILIZATION</u></b>  19. <u>Demobilization and check-out.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive demobilization instructions from work supervisor.</li> <li>• Brief subordinates on procedures and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Insure that incident and agency demobilization procedures are followed. If required, ICS Form 221 (Demobilization Check-Out) is completed and turned in to appropriate person.</li> </ul>	I		

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## INSTRUCTIONS for EVALUATION RECORD

**There are four separate blocks allowing evaluations to be made. These evaluations may be made on incidents, by simulation in classroom, or in daily duties, depending on what the position task book indicates. This should be sufficient for qualification in the position if the individual is adequately prepared. If additional blocks are needed, a page can be copied from a blank task book and attached.**

**Evaluator's name, incident/office title & agency:** List the name of the evaluator, his/her incident position (on incidents) or office title, and agency.

**Evaluator's home unit address & phone:** self explanatory

**#:** The number in the upper left corner of the experience block identifies a particular experience or group of experiences. This number should be placed in the column labeled "Evaluation Record #" on the Qualification Record in order to indicate the circumstances under which a particular task was performed.

**Location of Incident/Simulation:** Identify the location where the tasks were performed by agency and office.

**Incident Type:** Enter type of incident, e.g., wildfire, search and rescue, flood, etc.

**Number and Type of Resources:** Enter the number of resources and types assigned to the incident pertinent to the trainee's task book position.

**Duration:** Enter inclusive dates during which the individual was evaluated. This block may indicate a span of time covering several small and similar incidents if the individual has been evaluated on that basis, i.e., several initial attack fires in similar fuel types.

**Mgt. Level:** Indicate ICS organization level, i.e., Type 4, Type 3, Type 2, Type 1 or Area Command.

**NFFL Fuel Model:** For wildfire experience, enter number (1-13) of the fuel model in which the incident occurred and under which the individual was evaluated.

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Short Grass (1 foot)         | 8. Closed Timber Litter        |
| 2. Timber (grass & understory)  | 9. Hardwood Litter             |
| 3. Tall grass (2 1/2 feet)      | 10. Timber (litter understory) |
| 4. Chaparral (6 feet)           | 11. Light Logging Slash        |
| 5. Brush (2 feet)               | 12. Medium Logging Slash       |
| 6. Dormant brush-Hardwood Slash | 13. Heavy Logging Slash        |
| 7. Southern Rough               |                                |

**Recommendation:** Check as appropriate and/or make comments regarding the future needs for development of this trainee.

**Date:** List the date the record is being completed.

**Evaluator's initials:** Initial here to authenticate your recommendations and to allow for comparison with initials in the Qualifications Record.

**Evaluator's relevant red card rating:** List your certification relevant to the trainee position you supervised.

## Evaluation Record

TRAINEE NAME		TRAINEE POSITION			
<b>#1</b>	Evaluator's name, incident/office title & agency:				
Evaluator's home unit address & phone:					
Location of Incident or Simulation (agency & area)	Incident Type (wildfire, search & rescue, etc.)	Number & Type of Resources Pertinent to Trainee's Position	Duration (inclusive dates in trainee status)	Mgt. Level (Area Command, Type 1, 2, 3, or 4)	NFFL Fuel Model
			to		
<p>The tasks initialed &amp; dated by me have been performed under my supervision and in a satisfactory manner by the above named trainee. I recommend the following for further development of this trainee:</p> <p>_____ The individual has successfully performed all tasks for the position and should be considered for certification.</p> <p>_____ The individual was not able to complete certain tasks (comments below) or additional guidance is required.</p> <p>_____ Not all tasks were evaluated on this assignment and an additional assignment is needed to complete the evaluation.</p> <p>_____ The individual is severely deficient in the performance of tasks for the position and must complete all training (both mandatory &amp; suggested) prior to further assignment as a trainee.</p> <p>Recommendations: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date: _____ Evaluator's initials: _____ Evaluator's relevant red card (or agency certification) rating: _____</p>					

<b>#2</b>	Evaluator's name, incident/office title & agency:				
Evaluator's home unit address & phone:					
Location of Incident or Simulation (agency & area)	Incident Type (wildfire, search & rescue, etc.)	Number & Type of Resources Pertinent to Trainee's Position	Duration (inclusive dates in trainee status)	Mgt. Level (Area Command, Type 1, 2, 3, or 4)	NFFL Fuel Model
			to		
<p>The tasks initialed &amp; dated by me have been performed under my supervision and in a satisfactory manner by the above named trainee. I recommend the following for further development of this trainee:</p> <p>_____ The individual has successfully performed all tasks for the position and should be considered for certification.</p> <p>_____ The individual was not able to complete certain tasks (comments below) or additional guidance is required.</p> <p>_____ Not all tasks were evaluated on this assignment and an additional assignment is needed to complete the evaluation.</p> <p>_____ The individual is severely deficient in the performance of tasks for the position and must complete all training (both mandatory &amp; suggested) prior to further assignment as a trainee.</p> <p>Recommendations: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date: _____ Evaluator's initials: _____ Evaluator's relevant red card (or agency certification) rating: _____</p>					

## Evaluation Record (Continuation Sheet)

TRAINEE NAME		TRAINEE POSITION			
<b>#3</b>	Evaluator's name, incident/office title & agency:				
Evaluator's home unit address & phone:					
Location of Incident or Simulation (agency & area)	Incident Type (wildfire, search & rescue, etc.)	Number & Type of Resources Pertinent to Trainee's Position	Duration (inclusive dates in trainee status)	Mgt. Level (Area Command, Type 1, 2, 3, or 4)	NFFL Fuel Model
			to		
<p>The tasks initialed &amp; dated by me have been performed under my supervision and in a satisfactory manner by the above named trainee. I recommend the following for further development of this trainee:</p> <p>_____ The individual has successfully performed all tasks for the position and should be considered for certification.</p> <p>_____ The individual was not able to complete certain tasks (comments below) or additional guidance is required.</p> <p>_____ Not all tasks were evaluated on this assignment and an additional assignment is needed to complete the evaluation.</p> <p>_____ The individual is severely deficient in the performance of tasks for the position and must complete all training (both mandatory &amp; suggested) prior to further assignment as a trainee.</p> <p>Recommendations: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date: _____ Evaluator's initials: _____ Evaluator's relevant red card (or agency certification) rating: _____</p>					

<b>#4</b>	Evaluator's name, incident/office title & agency:				
Evaluator's home unit address & phone:					
Location of Incident or Simulation (agency & area)	Incident Type (wildfire, search & rescue, etc.)	Number & Type of Resources Pertinent to Trainee's Position	Duration (inclusive dates in trainee status)	Mgt. Level (Area Command, Type 1, 2, 3, or 4)	NFFL Fuel Model
			to		
<p>The tasks initialed &amp; dated by me have been performed under my supervision and in a satisfactory manner by the above named trainee. I recommend the following for further development of this trainee:</p> <p>_____ The individual has successfully performed all tasks for the position and should be considered for certification.</p> <p>_____ The individual was not able to complete certain tasks (comments below) or additional guidance is required.</p> <p>_____ Not all tasks were evaluated on this assignment and an additional assignment is needed to complete the evaluation.</p> <p>_____ The individual is severely deficient in the performance of tasks for the position and must complete all training (both mandatory &amp; suggested) prior to further assignment as a trainee.</p> <p>Recommendations: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date: _____ Evaluator's initials: _____ Evaluator's relevant red card (or agency certification) rating: _____</p>					